

FIRST DIVISION

[A.M. NO. P-06-2240 (FORMERLY OCA IPI NO. 06-2353-P), April 12, 2007]

AMELITA CASTILLO-CASIQUIN, COMPLAINANT, VS. GREGORIA FIGUERREZ CANSINO, COURT STENOGRAPHER, REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF IBA, ZAMBALES, BRANCH 69, RESPONDENT.

R E S O L U T I O N

CORONA, J.:

Complainant Amelita Castillo-Casiquin charges respondent Gregoria Figuerrez Cansino, court stenographer in Branch 69 of the Regional Trial Court of Iba, Zambales, with disgraceful and immoral conduct for marrying and cohabiting with her (complainant's) husband.

In her complaint,^[1] complainant stated that she is the wife of Villamor Casiquin to whom she was married on November 26, 1977. Sometime in November 1983, she discovered that her husband was cohabiting with respondent. She also later learned that respondent married Villamor on January 9, 1984 despite her knowledge (as complainant's former best friend and co-employee) that he was very much married to complainant. Respondent's cohabitation with Villamor bore two children.

In her comment,^[2] respondent admitted marrying and cohabiting with Villamor but claimed that she did so in good faith because he made her believe that his marriage to complainant was fake. Villamor told her that his real name was Victor Cansino, not Villamor Casiquin which was the name he used when he married complainant. However, when respondent confronted Villamor sometime in July 1985 on why he signed the birth certificate of their second daughter as Villamor Casiquin, he confessed that that was his real name. After this confession, respondent left him and has since then lived separately from him.

After evaluating the complaint as well as respondent's comment, the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) submitted its report.^[3] The OCA found that respondent married and cohabited freely with Villamor, a married man. It disregarded respondent's claim of good faith because Villamor never concealed his marital status from her. Since she knew all along that Villamor was married, she should not have married or cohabited with him.

The OCA found respondent guilty of disgraceful and immoral conduct for engaging in an amorous relationship with a married man. But considering that it was respondent's first offense, the OCA recommended only a suspension of six months and one day.

We agree.